

Saskatchewan History

★ Urban Municipalities
in the
North-West
Territories

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Urban Municipalities in the North-West Territories: Their Development and Machinery of Government

THE urban municipality was the most significant form of local government during the Territorial period. The initiative and pressure to introduce local government came almost entirely from urban residents. Urban municipalities were the first local government units established. Aside from the school district, it was the only form which developed successfully without considerable departure from the original plan of organization. Finally, and again aside from the school unit, it was the only form which developed extensively on a purely voluntary basis. The story of the urban municipalities throws much light on problems of western pioneer development and the part played by local government in their solution.

The establishment of urban municipalities appears to have been assumed from the beginning of the significant period of settlement in the 1880's. Settlers newly-arrived from eastern Canada were familiar with a long-established urban municipal system. Furthermore, they quickly found that such a system was indispensable in dealing with the problems of urban living. Voluntary associations were organized to meet needs for fire protection, water supply, etc., but appear to have met with only moderate success and to have been regarded as only temporary expedients.¹ Consequently, there arose a demand for municipal government while the local population still lived and carried on business in tents and shacks. Regina residents held meetings in December 1882 to consider the problem of fire protection and to provide for an informal system of town government.² An outcome of this was the submission of a petition, dated December 28th, 1882, to Sir John Macdonald, Minister of the Interior, requesting that Parliament pass legislation incorporating Regina, with the usual powers granted to cities.³ This was followed quickly by meetings, circulation of petitions, and other activities in such growing urban centres as Moose Jaw,⁴ Medicine Hat,⁵ Prince Albert,⁶ and Edmonton.⁷

The Dominion government took no action on the Regina petition and it was realized that local government was to be under the control of the Territorial government, analogous to its position under provincial government in the rest of Canada. Consequently, throughout most of 1883, the North-West Council was being urged to provide the facilities necessary for municipal incorporation. The

¹ The most extensive of such informal arrangements was in Regina. See A. N. Reid, "Informal Town Government in Regina, 1882-3", *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. VI, No. 3 (Autumn, 1953) pp. 81-8.

² J. W. Powers, *The History of Regina*, pp. 20-1.

³ Department of the Interior (Dominion Lands Branch): File 54657. Transcript in Archives of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon.

⁴ *Regina Leader*, April 5th, 1883.

⁵ *Ibid.*, August 2nd.

⁶ *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, August 8th, 1883.

⁷ *Journals of the Council of the North-West Territories*, 1883, p. 39.

expectation at first was that municipal status would be conferred by a special ordinance of incorporation for each centre and bills were introduced for this purpose. After some delay it was decided, however, to pass a general ordinance which included provisions for incorporation by proclamation. During the drafting of this rather detailed legislation the Civic Committee of Regina, which had been attempting informally to perform municipal functions, made representations to the North-West Council and some of their suggestions were adopted.⁸ The *Municipal Ordinance*, passed on October 4th, 1883, was the basis for the existence and powers of most urban municipalities. While the main outlines of the system provided for in this original legislation continued throughout the Territorial period, its details were altered by amendments at almost every subsequent legislative session.⁹

Urban municipalities came into existence through legal procedures which varied with the changing nature of urban growth and with changes in opinion regarding the most effective means of meeting the need for local government. For several years units were erected by proclamation of the Lieutenant-Governor under the authority of the *Municipal Ordinance*. Town municipalities might be erected where there was a resident population of 300 or more within an area of 320-2560 acres and certain procedures were followed.¹⁰ Powers and other aspects of the legal status of these first urban municipalities were specified in the *Municipal Ordinance*. In general, they were the same as for "rural municipalities" but certain additional powers, appropriate to their urban nature, were granted. Under the 1883 legislation the town municipalities of Regina¹¹ and Moose Jaw¹² were proclaimed and, under the 1884 legislation, those of Calgary¹³ and Prince Albert.¹⁴

Interest in municipal organization was reported in such other places as Broadview,¹⁵ Battleford,¹⁶ and Moosomin¹⁷ but in none of these cases did the activity lead to incorporation. In fact, within a few years it was clear that the early enthusiasm for full-scale municipal government had waned and that new municipalities were likely to come into existence rather infrequently. The procedures for incorporation previously mentioned were dropped in 1885 and provision made that town municipalities were to be erected by ordinance of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.¹⁸ Special ordinances were passed incorporating

⁸ *Regina Leader*, September 20th, 1883.

⁹ See Note A for a complete list of the relevant legislation. In the text of this article changes in the *Municipal Ordinance* will be referred to by citing the date of the session at which the amending ordinance was passed.

¹⁰ See Note B.

¹¹ *The North-West Territories Gazette*, December 8th, 1883.

¹² *Ibid.*, January 19th, 1884.

¹³ *Ibid.*, November 17th, 1884.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, November 2nd, 1885.

¹⁵ *Regina Leader*, January 7th, 1884.

¹⁶ *Saskatchewan Herald* (Battleford), October 17th, 1884.

¹⁷ *Courier* (Moosomin), April 23rd, 1885.

¹⁸ See Note C.

Moosomin,¹⁹ Lethbridge,²⁰ Edmonton,²¹ Macleod,²² Whitewood,²³ Medicine Hat,²⁴ Wolseley,²⁵ and Strathcona.²⁶ The legal status and powers of these towns were, in general, the same as those of the group incorporated by proclamation, as the basis in each case was the *Municipal Ordinance*.²⁷ In some cases, however, advantage was taken of the special ordinance procedure to meet particular local requirements. For example, in Moosomin the maximum rate that might be levied was restricted to one cent on the dollar of assessment, as compared with two cents on the dollar permitted by the *Municipal Ordinance*. In Whitewood there were to be only four councillors, in contrast to the usual six, and they were to receive no remuneration for the first few years. Special powers in regard to ferries were granted to Edmonton. Such special provisions were sometimes altered by subsequent special legislation.

The next stage in the development of incorporation procedures resulted from the evolution of the village as a unit of local government in the 1890's. As the communities involved continued to grow, many of them found that village status was no longer adequate for their needs. At first, as there was no other procedure available, the transition from village to incorporated town had to be effected by special ordinance. Action was initiated by petitions of ratepayers and special ordinances were passed incorporating the former villages of Yorkton,²⁸ Red Deer,²⁹ and Cardston.³⁰ The legislation in each case was quite simple and provided, in general, that the new towns were to function according to the *Municipal Ordinance*. A few special provisions were included. For example, Yorkton was to have only four councillors and the powers of its council were slightly restricted. In all three towns, certain provisions of the Village Ordinance, e.g., respecting the prevention of disease, were to remain in effect until over-ruled by council by-laws. The rapid growth of a large number of such communities led to the adoption in 1901 of regular procedures. Villages with over 400 inhabitants might be erected into towns by proclamation, after a number of preliminary steps.³¹ The available records of votes taken on proposals for incorporation at ratepayers' meetings indicate that transition to town status was highly popular. During the remainder of the Territorial period a substantial number of communities took advantage of the procedure.³² As the erection procedure was general,

¹⁹ No. 25 of 1887, proclaimed on March 20th, 1889.

²⁰ No. 24 of 1890.

²¹ No. 7 of 1891-2.

²² No. 29 of 1892.

²³ No. 34 of 1892.

²⁴ No. 42 of 1898.

²⁵ No. 43 of 1898.

²⁶ No. 28 of 1899.

²⁷ In this connection it is to be noted that until 1897 town municipalities enjoyed certain powers, in regard to passing bylaws, not granted to "rural municipalities". In that year, however, the distinction was dropped and the additional powers were conferred on all municipalities.

²⁸ No. 41 of 1900.

²⁹ No. 42 of 1901.

³⁰ No. 43 of 1901.

³¹ See Note D.

³² 1902, Lacombe, Wetaskiwin; 1903, Maple Creek, Raymond, Saskatoon, Weyburn, Arcola, Wapella, Rosthern, Innisfail; 1904, Oxbow, Battleford, Okotoks, Qu'Appelle, Fort Saskatchewan, Ponoka, St. Albert; 1905 (to August 31st), Lumsden, Olds, Carnduff, Claresholm.

as contrasted to the previous individual system, the status of each of these towns was determined entirely by the *Municipal Ordinance*, except insofar as it was altered by subsequent special legislation.

Finally, the towns of Indian Head and Qu'Appelle were erected by special procedures necessitated by the fact that their situations differed from that of any of the preceding cases. The townsites for which urban incorporation was desired were parts of existing "rural municipalities." In the years 1894 to 1896 the *Municipal Ordinance* had included a provision for the erection of towns out of portions of rural municipalities³³ but this was dropped in 1897. Therefore, when the residents of the townsite of Indian Head (in the "rural municipality" of Indian Head) desired town status, their only course of action was to petition for a special ordinance of incorporation. This was duly passed in 1902.³⁴ Shortly afterwards residents of Qu'Appelle townsite (in the "rural municipality" of South Qu'Appelle) petitioned for incorporation. Opposition existed, however, and a counter-petition was submitted. In view of the uncertainty, the Assembly's Standing Committee on Standing Orders and Private Bills recommended that no action be taken until full opportunity had been given for the ratepayers to record their opinion on the question.³⁵ Furthermore, for such cases, they recommended procedures similar to those in regard to the erection of towns out of villages. Legislation to give effect to this latter recommendation was passed at the current session and, in accordance therewith, the townsite of Qu'Appelle was erected into a town by proclamation early in 1904.³⁶

All cities which came into existence during the Territorial period were erected by special ordinance. During certain years the *Municipal Ordinance* did provide a general method of procedure but no cities were erected during the years in which these provisions were operative.³⁷ The basis for the desire to advance from town to city status was analogous to the transition from village to town municipality. The powers available to towns under the *Municipal Ordinance* were not adequate for the purposes of government of the largest urban communities. The most frequent deficiency was associated with the limitations on borrowing power. Town municipalities found that the restrictions prevented their raising sufficient funds to finance large public utilities such as electric light, waterworks, and sewerage systems. Action for incorporation as a city was initiated at the local level and took the form of a petition by the mayor and council, usually after approval by a meeting of ratepayers. The following cities were erected by special ordinance: Calgary³⁸ in 1893, Regina³⁹ and Moose Jaw⁴⁰ in 1903, and Edmonton⁴¹ and Prince Albert⁴² in 1904. The Calgary and Edmonton ordinances pro-

³³ This involved a petition by the local council or a group of residents and the issue of letters patent by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

³⁴ No. 20 of 1902.

³⁵ *Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories*, 1903 (second session), p. 24.

³⁶ *North-West Territories Gazette*, March 15th, 1904.

³⁷ See Note E.

³⁸ No. 33 of 1893.

³⁹ No. 28 of 1903 (first session).

⁴⁰ No. 34 of 1903 (second session).

⁴¹ No. 19 of 1904.

⁴² No. 20 of 1904.

vided that the *Municipal Ordinance* was not to apply and therefore the status of these cities was determined entirely by their ordinances of incorporation and subsequent special legislation. In many respects, however, the provisions were identical with or similar to those of the *Municipal Ordinance*. The ordinances erecting the other three cities provided that the *Municipal Ordinance* was to be applicable except insofar as specific exceptions were made. On a number of such matters rather substantial deviation from the *Municipal Ordinance* was provided for to meet particular local circumstances and desires.

MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT

The urban municipalities were governed in part through direct participation of the ratepayers and other residents and in part through elected representatives. While the main emphasis was upon representative government, direct participation took a variety of forms and was significant in its total effect. Much council activity was initiated through presentation of petitions by ratepayers and others. Furthermore, certain types of action by council were contingent upon ratification by a vote of ratepayers. Examples were long-term borrowing, granting bonuses, tax exemption for more than one year, and engaging in certain types of public utility and other municipal enterprises. In regard to matters which legally were entirely within the discretion of the council, the latter, in practice, frequently consulted organized groups, such as the local Agricultural Society and the Board of Trade, or the community as a whole at specially-summoned meetings of ratepayers. The latter were normally permitted to attend council meetings and were kept well-informed about civic affairs by news reports and editorials in local newspapers. They were in a position, therefore, to participate directly in policy formation and many individual issues were settled through the "direct democracy" of public meetings.

While the direct participation of ratepayers was important on particular occasions, civic affairs normally were carried on through elected representatives. The governing body was the council, composed of the mayor and councillors (usually "aldermen" in the case of cities). The number of councillors varied from time to time and from place to place, from a minimum of four to a maximum of ten.⁴³ The increase from four to six in 1888 followed petitions for this from the Regina and Moose Jaw Councils.⁴⁴ The term for mayor specified by the *Municipal Ordinance* was one year, except in the original legislation which provided for a two-year term. Until 1897 the term specified for councillor was one year. This was considered by some to be too short for efficient government. For example, the *Regina Leader* in 1890 expressed the opinion that "one year was not sufficient to mature and perfect a big plan [for sanitary measures]" and advocated terms of three years for mayor and councillors.⁴⁵ The *Moose Jaw Times*, deploring the unwillingness of members of the 1895 council to run again, stated that "to elect an entire new board is a great disadvantage—a calamity to the town. The routine

⁴³ See Note F.

⁴⁴ Regina Council Minutes, October 17th, 1887, and Moose Jaw Council Minutes, October 10th, 1887.

⁴⁵ *Regina Leader*, November 25th, 1890.

work requires study, the proper management of the town is more than a study and it is impossible for the greatest intelligence to master the situation in a single year."⁴⁶ In 1897 the term was increased to two years, with half of the councillors retiring each year.

Election of councillors on a ward basis was permitted during a portion of the Territorial period. At the time of the drafting of the original *Municipal Ordinance* the Civic Committee of Regina had suggested that the ward system be made optional,⁴⁷ and this was provided for in 1884. Prince Albert was the only town which took advantage of this provision. It was divided into four wards in 1887,⁴⁸ which, according to a local newspaper, was "in accordance with the wishes of many of the ratepayers."⁴⁹ Two of the wards were to elect one councillor each and the other two wards two councillors each.⁵⁰ This optional provision was omitted from the *Municipal Ordinance* in 1894 but restored in the following year. At the time of the restoration it was stated in Assembly debate that it would reduce the cost of election proceedings.⁵¹ Notwithstanding this consideration, the provision was again dropped in 1897 and was not reintroduced during the remainder of the Territorial period. As for cities, the ward system was provided for in the special ordinances incorporating Calgary and Edmonton. The other cities, erected after 1897 and deriving their powers mainly from the *Municipal Ordinance*, did not have the option of establishing wards.

Eligibility for election as mayor or councillor was somewhat restricted under the *Municipal Ordinance*. Throughout the period, candidates were required to be British subjects (after 1894, specified as either "natural born or naturalized subjects"), male, and over 21 years of age. Residence was required in the municipality or, after 1895, within two miles of its limits. After 1894 candidates were required to be able to read and write. There was also a property qualification for almost all of the period. This had been suggested by the Civic Committee of Regina at the time of the original drafting of the *Municipal Ordinance*,⁵² introduced in 1884, and retained thereafter. It ranged from a low of \$400 to a high of \$5000 (in the case of leasehold property in cities during certain years).⁵³ There were both supporters and opponents of the property qualification and the following newspaper editorials sum up the respective views. A supporting view was expressed in Regina at the beginning of the period.

One thing is of first importance, that the council should be representative, and as the majority of the people of Regina are property holders the majority of the council should be property holders. This is the only guarantee that we can have economy, and with the example of Winnipeg and Brandon before their eyes, we hope the people of Regina will throw their influence against reckless expenditure, and reckless expenditure

⁴⁶ *Moose Jaw Times*, January 6th, 1896.

⁴⁷ *Regina Leader*, September 20th, 1883.

⁴⁸ Prince Albert By-law No. 27, July 18th, 1887.

⁴⁹ *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, July 22nd, 1887.

⁵⁰ Prince Albert By-law No. 34, December 14th, 1887.

⁵¹ *Regina Leader*, October 3rd, 1895.

⁵² *Regina Leader*, September 20th, 1883.

⁵³ See Note G.

they will have if they elect men to spend money to which it will not be necessary for them to contribute a cent.⁵⁴

The contrary view was expressed in Moose Jaw at a later date. This comment was elicited by the mayor's criticism of the property qualification because it made it difficult to get into the council young men who were competent in every way for the position.

This is only in accord with the enlightenment of all progressive nations. It is argued by the best political economists that there should be no property qualification whatever for any public office. It is the man himself and not what he is worth that is the great desideratum. The principle is based on the assertion that a man without any property whatever is just as much interested in the good government of the community in which he lives as the man who holds more real estate than any of his neighbors. Without, however, committing oneself to this extreme view yet there is sufficient to warrant approval of an alteration in the law on the lines indicated by Mayor Bogue. It by no means follows that because a man is a large ratepayer or owner of an extensive property, that therefore he would make the most economical town councillor. Indeed the chances are in a contrary direction. The man of extensive means, who is not particular to a few dollars, is usually the man to sneer at a cheese-paring policy, and to approve of expenditures that though they hardly press upon him, yet press heavily upon his less fortunate neighbors. Those wince that have their withers wrung, and the person most likely to look after the way money is spent, is he who feels, and feels keenly, every dollar he is called upon to pay. The smallest taxpayer may be making a greater sacrifice from his resources than the largest one, he may feel the strain much more keenly, and thus may be far more inclined to economy than the largest, because wealthiest, taxpayers in the whole community."⁵⁵

On at least one occasion, in Prince Albert in 1900, complaint about the lack of property qualifications of the person elected mayor led to a court hearing. His election was declared invalid and a new election ordered.⁵⁶ A local newspaper asserted that the property qualification provision had been a dead letter in Prince Albert and that proper application of it would have precluded many others from holding office.⁵⁷ For both towns and cities, certain persons were disqualified from holding office. The provisions in this respect changed from time to time but at one time or another the *Municipal Ordinance* declared ineligible a long list of persons, including clergymen, judges, etc.⁵⁸

The qualifications for voting in elections for mayor and councillors were altered from time to time. The original legislation restricted voting to male British subjects, over 21 years of age, and assessed for over \$300. The assessment qualification was reduced in 1886 to \$200, an amount that had been suggested originally by the Civic Committee of Regina.⁵⁹ The franchise was extended further in 1888 by the inclusion of otherwise-qualified unmarried women and widows, and

⁵⁴ *Regina Leader*, November 15th, 1883.

⁵⁵ *Moose Jaw Times*, January 17th, 1896.

⁵⁶ *Advocate* (Prince Albert), January 29th, 1900.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, February 5th, 1900.

⁵⁸ See Note H.

⁵⁹ *Regina Leader*, November 16th, 1883.

in 1891-2 by the removal of the nationality qualification. The significance of the latter change was not great at the time as the bulk of the population had come from Eastern Canada and the British Isles. But within a few years it was much more important, as urban centres, as well as rural areas, were swollen by an influx of population from the United States and Continental Europe. Finally, in 1886, councils were given the option of requiring the payment of tax arrears as a condition for voting. This provision had been suggested by the Calgary town council.⁶⁰ The provision was not completely popular. It was opposed in the debate on the subject in the North-West Council but was carried on a majority vote.⁶¹ A Prince Albert newspaper editorial asserted that "It certainly seems a hardship to deny a man a vote because he has not paid his taxes, besides the powers of the tax collector are a guarantee that the taxes will be forthcoming".⁶² However, once the provision was introduced, it was widely adopted and councils regularly passed by-laws making the qualification effective for the forthcoming election. In at least one case, there is clear evidence that it resulted in a somewhat more rapid payment of taxes. A description of the Moosomin election of 1891 states that, of 193 persons on the voters' list, only about 50 were not still in arrears by election day. On that day, however, an additional 50 paid all arrears and were allowed to vote.⁶³

The first stage in the election process was the preparation of the voters' list by the clerk (after 1897, the secretary-treasurer) on the basis of the assessment roll. Applications to have names added or struck off were permitted and dealt with by the council, sitting as a Court of Revision.

Election activity normally began shortly before nomination day. Usually the local newspaper would remind readers of the forthcoming elections and their importance and exhort them to give careful thought to the selection of the new council. Their news columns, however, frequently stated that there was little activity to report. From time to time they would mention rumours of possible candidates and occasionally a reporter would canvass leading citizens as to their intentions.⁶⁴ Sometimes it would be reported that a petition was being circulated asking an individual to enter the contest.⁶⁵ The most frequent event connected with this stage of the election process was the holding of a ratepayers' meeting. This was not required by law but in some municipalities appears to have been a regular practice. In Yorkton, which previously had had village status, it appears to have been a continuation of the annual meeting required under the *Village Ordinance*. Sometimes the meetings were joint gatherings for consideration of school and municipal affairs. The general purpose of the meeting was to inform ratepayers of the current situation and of developments during the preceding year. Attendance varied but was frequently small and on some occasions not even

⁶⁰ T. A. Boys, Town Clerk, Calgary, to A. E. Forget, Clerk of the North-West Territories Council, Regina, December 9th, 1885. (Attorney-General's File No. 261L).

⁶¹ *Regina Leader*, November 16th, 1886.

⁶² *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, December 3rd, 1886.

⁶³ *Courier* (Moosomin), January 8th, 1891.

⁶⁴ e.g. *Spectator* (Moosomin), December 15th, 1892.

⁶⁵ e.g. *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, December 23rd, 1887.

all council members were present. The mayor sometimes gave a review of events of the year. Financial statements were frequently presented. Moose Jaw Council in 1902 had printed 200 copies for distribution at such a meeting,⁶⁶ but on another occasion complaint was made that no financial statement was available.⁶⁷ Reports on particular activities were presented by individual councillors, e.g. the chairmen of the responsible council committees. Opportunity was given for the participation of ratepayers and resolutions were passed relating to municipal affairs.⁶⁸ Such ratepayers' meetings provided an opportunity for expression of views by council members and others who were intending to enter the forthcoming election.

A preliminary to the nomination meeting was the appointment of the returning officer who presided. At the same time council, if and as required, appointed deputy returning officers and specified polling divisions and polling places. Nomination day was fixed by the *Municipal Ordinance*: in 1884 as the last Monday in December, in 1894 as the first Monday in January, and in 1896 as the first Monday in December (in each case, if that day was a legal holiday the nominations were to be on the day following). Public interest in municipal affairs may be gauged to some extent by the degree of competition for elective offices and, on this criterion, it must be admitted that on many occasions interest was slight. In spite of newspaper exhortation and other election preliminaries there was frequent difficulty in getting the minimum number of candidates to fill the vacancies by acclamation. A not un-typical example was reported in Moose Jaw in the early 'nineties. Few ratepayers attended the meeting and "no person seemed anxious to assume the responsibilities and duties of the mayoralty. Mr. H. U. Rorison was at last prevailed on to accept nomination and was declared elected by acclamation."⁶⁹ Six vacancies for councillors were to be filled and ten persons were nominated, but afterwards five of these declined to run. Later still one of these five agreed to leave his name in and so the six required were elected by acclamation.⁷⁰ The local newspaper commented editorially:

It does seem a disgrace that six men cannot be found in the town who will take enough interest in civic affairs to serve for a year on the Council Board. This is in marked contrast to the hot contest of seats at the council table last year. The action of some of the business men of the town in refusing to have anything to do with civic affairs shows a lack of public spirit on their part. When men become so wrapt up in their private business so as to be unwilling to devote any time to the public welfare they cease to be good citizens. Ratepayers and citizens of Moose Jaw, consider the situation and reflect on the effect the present state of affairs will have on the future of the town.⁷¹

A similar situation was reported from Prince Albert in connection with another nomination meeting which resulted in all positions being filled by acclamation. "The lack of interest in civic affairs (on nomination day) is becoming more and

⁶⁶ Moose Jaw Council Minutes, November 24th, 1902.

⁶⁷ *Moose Jaw Times*, December 1st, 1899.

⁶⁸ e.g. Yorkton Council Minutes: "Minutes of Annual Meeting, November 28th, 1902".

⁶⁹ *Moose Jaw Times*, January 1st, 1892.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

more apparent year by year . . . The majority indeed appear totally indifferent as to whether any representatives at all shall be nominated or not . . ."⁷²

Two reasons for lack of competition were suggested in a Prince Albert newspaper editorial which commented on the election for the 1890 council. It stated that the dearth of candidates

may be accounted for on the score that the positions of mayor or councillor is a thankless one. It may be on the other hand that the rate-payers are satisfied with the present Council, and are quite willing that the members thereof should be given another term. There are no emoluments attached to these positions, and as a rule the incumbents of them get more abuse than thanks, no matter how well they may have borne themselves, but good men should not on that account hold themselves back. They should be willing to make some sacrifices for the public weal as well as their own.⁷³

Furthermore, the desire to retain members who had served satisfactorily sometimes stifled competition. Thus the Whitewood newspaper reported that the elections in December 1900 did not create much excitement because "a feeling has generally been felt that the old council should be re-elected by acclamation for another term. Mr. John Taylor who has been a councillor for several terms was in the field as a candidate for the office of mayor, but by the request of his supporters he consented to withdraw his name as an aspirant for that office."⁷⁴ This permitted the re-election of the incumbent by acclamation. Finally, on occasions, individuals with some interest in holding office appear to have been unwilling to face an election contest. One suggested candidate for the position of mayor of Moosomin for 1893 told a newspaper reporter that he did not desire to see a contest between two members of council and that he was quite willing to see the other suggested candidate elected without opposition.⁷⁵

On many occasions, however, more candidates stood for election than there were vacancies. As the poll was held a week after nomination day there was little time left for campaigning. Occasionally ratepayers' meetings were held for the purpose of allowing candidates to express their views and, in the case of those who had previously held office, to defend their records. The effectiveness of such meetings appears to have varied. For instance, it was reported that at a "well-attended" meeting in Rosthern in 1903 "the questions at issue were all gone into thoroughly."⁷⁶ In contrast, at a ratepayers' meeting of about 50 persons in Moosomin in 1890, some people spoke but no members of the finance committee were present, in spite of their having been specially invited. As a consequence, no financial statement was available when demanded and the meeting had to be satisfied with some figures provided by the town treasurer. After further argument many of those who had been nominated (at the earlier nomination meeting) withdrew but were requested to allow their names to go to the poll.⁷⁷ Occasionally

⁷² *Saskatchewan Times* (Prince Albert), December 29th, 1893.

⁷³ *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, December 20th, 1889.

⁷⁴ *Herald* (Whitewood), December 6th, 1900.

⁷⁵ *Spectator* (Moosomin), December 15th, 1892.

⁷⁶ *Advocate* (Prince Albert), December 14th, 1903.

⁷⁷ *Courier* (Moosomin), January 1st, 1891.

rather lively meetings were reported, as in Prince Albert where "candidates for the mayoralty took the floor and made the hall ring with charges against each other."⁷⁸

The medium of the local newspaper was utilized but weekly publication restricted use to a single issue. This usually contained news reports, letters to the editor, an editorial, and sometimes brief election notices of individual candidates. Aside from this all campaigning was done by personal canvassing by the candidates and their friends. Occasionally this appears to have been rather exciting, with the circulation of rumours, charges, and counter-charges. The significance of this is difficult to determine. A newspaper report on the Prince Albert election of 1897 stated that:

a few excited individuals indulged in the usual election talk, and tried to circulate charges against the different candidates, mainly manufactured for the occasion, but the average elector paid little heed to these, and polled his vote according to the dictates of his own conscience There is one thing worthy of note, however, and that was the absence of mud-throwing by the various candidates during the campaign.⁷⁹

As far as can be discerned from local newspapers, the election issues tended to fall into three groups: municipal affairs, the positions of candidates on non-municipal questions, and the personal qualifications of candidates. As regards particular municipal policies, it is noticeable that the newspapers, while they took firm stands thereon during the year, seldom supported or opposed candidates because of the latter's views. This may reflect the fact that candidates appeared reluctant to commit themselves on controversial issues. It was rare for a newspaper to report, as in Prince Albert in 1889, that a mayoralty candidate spoke for over an hour at a ratepayers' meeting, went fully into municipal affairs, and "spoke very decidedly as to the policy he intended to pursue if elected, which would be one of economy."⁸⁰ There were occasional references to candidates supporting specific projects such as "a moderate system of fire protection for the town and some means of supplying the town with sufficient water."⁸¹ More frequently the discussion was in general terms. For example, at a Rosthern ratepayers' meeting "the tenor of each speaker's remarks was progressive—each man holding to the opinion that the time was ripe for extensive public improvements and embodying these in his platform."⁸² Even more frequent than the theme of "progress" was that of "economy". During the very first municipal election campaign (Regina in 1883) one candidate's election notice stated "economy will be my watchword"⁸³ and this was repeated with regularity. "Economy" was frequently combined with "efficiency" as by the candidate in Moose Jaw in 1896 who is reported to have said that "he was for keeping the expenses down to the lowest limit. He would see, too, that every man employed

⁷⁸ *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, January 3rd, 1900.

⁷⁹ *Advocate* (Prince Albert), December 14th, 1897.

⁸⁰ *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, January 4th, 1889.

⁸¹ *Spectator* (Moosomin), December 15th, 1892.

⁸² *Advocate* (Prince Albert), December 14th, 1903.

⁸³ *Regina Leader*, December 27th, 1883.

by the council earned his money . . . He would see, too, that every dollar was spent at the proper time, and not extra expenditures caused by grading streets when the ground was frozen.”⁸⁴ The reported “Hear! hear!” of the audience suggests that such appeals were effective with the electors of the period. Most frequent of all were the appeals based on a very general pledge to promote community interests. Typical of this is the election notice of a candidate for councillor in Whitewood in 1904, whose election notice stated “If elected I shall put forth my best efforts to guard the interests of the ratepayers and further the welfare of the town.”⁸⁵

As to the significance of the attitudes of candidates on matters not concerned with municipal affairs, little can be said with certainty because charges in this respect were almost always denied. Such charges were particularly frequent in Prince Albert. For example, an editorial in one local newspaper in 1891 denies the charge of its rival that the late election had been fought on Dominion party lines.⁸⁶ The paper also printed a letter to the editor signed by “A Liberal” stating that he had voted for the Conservative candidate even though he was a life-long Liberal. In 1897 another letter to the editor asserted that “Mr. Baker’s friends are already making the contest a party issue. It is also said that the liquor element in the Liberal party will support Mr. Baker.”⁸⁷ But Baker’s election notice in the same issue stated “I am not the candidate of any particular party, either political or non-political, temperate or non-temperate; I am before you as a citizen, ready and willing to do whatever I can to advance the best interests and welfare of our Town, to uphold law and order, practising economy, always in a progressive way.” Again, in 1899, the *Advocate* referred to a charge in a Winnipeg paper that the absence of T. O. Davis from Prince Albert had made possible the overthrow of the “machine politics” which he had introduced into municipal affairs. It denied that there had been any of this in the past and that the recent elections had been fought on party lines, although it did go so far as to say that “a number of well-known Conservative manipulators had worked strenuously for the successful candidate.”⁸⁸

While the newspaper evidence suggests that on occasions municipal and other issues were of significance in elections, it also suggests that, on the whole, the most important matter was the personal qualifications of the candidate. These included character, capacity, experience and past record in municipal affairs, willingness to devote time to civic business, occupation, and property ownership. A striking expression of such considerations is contained in an editorial in the *Regina Leader* prior to the first town elections.

In the councillors we want intelligence and integrity and public spirit, and freedom from itchy vanity and mangy ambition and small self-seeking. All these we want in the mayor or chairman; but for his efficiency, weight, address, knowledge of the world, a directing mind, knowledge and experience are required. In most towns and cities the vilest

⁸⁴ *Moose Jaw Times*, January 10th, 1896.

⁸⁵ *Herald* (Whitewood), December 8th, 1904.

⁸⁶ *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, January 14th, 1891.

⁸⁷ *Advocate* (Prince Albert), November 9th, 1897.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, December 25th, 1899.

and the lowest and worst wriggle into the council and corrupt and rob.
God grant such worms may be kept out of our apples.⁸⁹

Successful business experience was considered a desirable qualification for the management of local public affairs. "The proper persons to run a town are the people who make the town—the merchants, the mechanics, the hotelkeepers, the professional men; in a word, the men of business."⁹⁰ "Good, capable businessmen, irrespective of political creeds or beliefs, who will not stoop to personal or selfish purposes, but at all times keep the interests of the town before them are the ones we require."⁹¹ Finally, while opinion on the property qualification differed, there appears to have been on occasion some preference for candidates who possessed property well above that required to qualify. The basis for the preference was that it was expected to promote economy in civic affairs. As an editorial in a



—Archives of Saskatchewan

Public auction, old city hall, Regina, 1906.

Prince Albert newspaper in 1889 said "who are the men most likely to keep down taxation, those who have hundreds of dollars of taxes to pay or those who have only a few dollars to pay on property they may rid themselves of in a few days; We say give us some men with some large and permanent stake in the town."⁹²

The date for polling provided for by the *Municipal Ordinance* was one week after nomination day. It was therefore the first Monday in January until 1894,

⁸⁹ *Regina Leader*, October 25th, 1883.

⁹⁰ Editorial in *Regina Leader*, November 15th, 1883.

⁹¹ Editorial in *Advocate* (Prince Albert), November 9th, 1897.

⁹² *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, December 27th, 1889.

the second Monday in January until 1896, and the second Monday in December throughout the remainder of the Territorial period.⁹³ Initially voting was open, with votes being recorded in a poll-book. Before long, however, support arose for voting by ballot.⁹⁴ There was considerable debate on the topic at the 1885 session of the North-West Council.⁹⁵ Voting by ballot was supported on principle but opposed on the grounds of the expense involved.⁹⁶ At that session, however, the *Municipal Ordinance* was amended to provide that voting should be by secret ballot and to prescribe detailed procedures for poll clerks and returning officers. Hours of voting were from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. throughout the whole period.

As would be imagined from the general lack of enthusiasm in regard to nominations and campaigning, the usual report on the polling was that it "passed off very quietly". Only on infrequent occasions does there seem to have been much activity by candidates or their supporters. From 1884 onwards the *Municipal Ordinance* provided penalties for "corrupt practices." The latter included bribery, giving rewards for services at elections, engaging in elections for rewards, payment of money for use in bribery, receiving any consideration for voting, hiring teams for conveying voters, and intimidation.⁹⁷ Although no report has been discovered of any person being charged with such offenses, there is some evidence that the letter of the law was occasionally violated. For example, it was stated that in the Moose Jaw election of 1894 "each candidate left no stone unturned. All available livery rigs were utilized"⁹⁸. A Prince Albert newspaper reported, following the election of 1897, that "the absence of liquor and the irresponsible and disturbing element usually found hanging around on election day was the subject of remark and comment, and to all respectable citizens was a source of much satisfaction".⁹⁹ On the basis of the available records of balloting, it appears that the contests were quite close. Successful candidates usually were closely bunched and unsuccessful ones not far behind. This suggests that persons nominated for office preferred not to run unless they expected to have a reasonably good chance of election. Such an attitude would help to explain the large number of cases in which mayors and councillors were elected by acclamation.

It has already been pointed out that local opinion favoured the continuance in office of experienced council members as a means of promoting stability and efficiency in the management of municipal affairs. Furthermore it was noted that previous council experience was an asset in securing election and this in itself tended towards longer periods of service. The opposite tendency resulted, however, from the great reluctance to sacrifice time and effort, engage in election contests, and suffer the criticism and abuse which frequently followed even the most public-spirited efforts. On balance the latter considerations usually outweighed the former and so the total period of service of most elected officials was relatively

⁹³ If any of these was a legal holiday polling was to be held on the next day following.

⁹⁴ e.g. editorial in the *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, December 4th, 1885.

⁹⁵ *Regina Leader*, November 26th, 1885.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Beginning in 1888, provision was made for personal expenses of a candidate, for expenses for professional services, and for the fair cost of printing and advertising.

⁹⁸ *Moose Jaw Times*, January 5th, 1894.

⁹⁹ *Advocate* (Prince Albert), December 14th, 1897.

short. This is exemplified by experience in Regina and Moose Jaw. In Regina 43 councillors served in the period 1884-97 (when one-year terms were in effect). Of these, 23 served for 1 year only, 12 for 2 years, 5 for 3 years, 2 for 4 years, and 1 for 6 years. In the same period in Moose Jaw, of 49 councillors, 31 served for 1 year, 12 for 2 years, 5 for 3 years, and 1 for 5 years. For those who served more than one year, there was a tendency for terms to be consecutive. While the average term was short, there was almost always on each council at least one councillor who had served previously. For Moose Jaw, only in 1885 and 1886, and for Regina, only in 1891, was there a completely inexperienced set of councillors. Similar was the experience in regard to the position of mayor. In Regina, of the 14 persons elected to this position in the year 1884-1905, 7 served for 1 year only, 6 for 2 years each, and 1 for 3 years. In Moose Jaw, of the 12 persons serving during the same period, 7 served for 1 year only, and 4 for 2 years. An exception to the normal experience was the case of Richard Bogue, sometimes referred to as the "Father of the City",¹⁰⁰ who served as mayor in 1885, 1888, 1895 (part term), and continuously from 1896 to 1900 inclusive. It is quite clear, therefore, that with few exceptions there was only a small degree of continuity in the personnel of the machinery of local government as far as elected officials were concerned.

The council, composed of the mayor and councillors acting as a unit, was the most important single element in the municipal machinery. In a few matters its procedures were regulated by the *Municipal Ordinance*. The chief of these were the fixing of the date of the first meeting of the year (until 1896 the third Monday in January, and thereafter the first Monday in January), the number of members necessary for a quorum (a majority), procedures for passing by-laws, authority of the mayor at council meetings, procedures and conditions in connection with the appointment of certain officials, the preparation of estimates for the year, and the levying of the tax rate. Aside from regulations in regard to these matters, each council was free to conduct its affairs as it saw fit. This was specifically provided for by the following section of the *Municipal Ordinance*.

Every council may make regulations and by-laws—not provided for by this ordinance and not contrary to law—for governing its proceedings, calling meetings, the conduct of its members, appointing committees, and generally such regulations as the good of the municipality may require, and may repeal, alter and amend its own by-laws, except where by-laws are made for the purpose of raising money, levying assessments or striking rates.

Municipal councils took full advantage of this freedom to determine their own procedures. In most cases, shortly after incorporation the council passed a resolution or by-law specifying the "Rules of Order". This outlined, in considerable detail, procedures to be followed in regard to each phase of the council's activities. The functions of the council as a whole, the mayor, the individual councillor, and the council committees were clearly specified. Available council minutes suggest that rules of order were carefully followed and council business conducted with much formality.

¹⁰⁰ *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*, "Progress Edition", February 24th, 1951.

The chief function of the council acting as a unit was that of a legislative body. Within the authority granted by the *Municipal Ordinance* and except when by-laws had to be ratified by ratepayers, it was the final determinant of policy in municipal matters. As has been noted, the discussion of particular issues played little part in the electoral process. Therefore council members usually entered upon their legislative activities without commitments and consequently settled matters of policy on an *ad hoc* basis. Most frequently a project would originate, at least formally, through a proposal by a council member. On many occasions, however, it would be suggested by local ratepayers. Individual ratepayers regularly presented grievances and suggestions, either in person or by letter, and groups of ratepayers submitted petitions. In some cases action could be initiated formally only by a ratepayers' petition. Examples were the granting of bonuses, exemptions from taxation for more than one year, and "local improvements". However, in practice, there were cases of an individual or group making such proposal and the council instructing one or more of its members to circulate a petition to secure the necessary signatures so that the formality could be complied with.¹⁰¹ Finally, there were cases in which the original suggestion appears to have been made by permanent appointed officials or special consultants. However, suggestions in this last category were mostly in regard to the more technical details of a policy of which the main outlines had originated with council or ratepayers.

Policies adopted by municipal councils appear to have been formulated only after considerable deliberation. This was promoted by the rules of order. Notice of motion was usually required. By-laws could be finally passed only after three readings and consideration by council sitting as a committee of the whole. This last procedure was used also for discussion of many matters which ultimately were determined simply by resolution. A frequent step in policy formulation was reference of a contentious matter to an appropriate standing or special council committee for an advisory opinion. Sometimes individual councillors were requested to collect information. Furthermore, councils frequently did not rely solely on their collective wisdom. Taxpayers' meetings were called on many occasions to secure an expression of public opinion. In contrast to the meetings associated with the election process, these were specially summoned to consider some particular policy with which council was concerned. Public works, public utilities, fire protection, and methods of finance were frequent topics of discussion at such gatherings. Sometimes the results of the meeting appear to have been inconclusive while on other occasions a resolution would be passed advocating some specific policy. Expert advice was also sought. The town solicitor was consulted on legal aspects and technical consultants employed on an *ad hoc* basis. Councils were willing to pay substantial fees for the services of the latter before deciding on policy regarding such expensive projects as water supply, sewerage systems, etc. Councils also were willing to listen to personal representatives of companies supplying expensive equipment, for example, for fire protection. Finally, there was the all-pervading influence of public opinion. This operated in

¹⁰¹ e.g. Moosomin Council Minutes, May 7th, 1896.

part through the medium of newspaper editorials and letters to editors and also directly upon council members. That the latter was significant but not necessarily desirable is clearly indicated in one newspaper editorial.

. . . . we are sorry to see that there are a certain number of shop-counter loafers in town who, for lack of better employment or on account of a preference for idleness, would fain neutralize the best efforts of the council, by holding the members up to ridicule and endeavouring to create dissensions among them To the members of the council we say, do not give any heed to store or street politics; be guided by your own judgements and a healthy public opinion and do what you consider in the best interests of the municipality, and a discerning electorate will not be slow to approve your motives and actions.¹⁰²

As well as being the final determinant of policy, the council as a unit performed other functions. Usually on recommendation from appropriate committees, it passed accounts for payment, appointed officials, and granted licenses. Councils did not accept recommendations automatically, however, and on frequent occasions the majority of the council would overrule the views of one of its committees. Council as a whole also performed an important judicial function. It was required by the *Municipal Ordinance* to serve as the Court of Revision.¹⁰³ In this capacity it decided all appeals against assessment (subject to appeal to a court of law) and finally determined the voters' list.

While council as a unit had the final voice in civic affairs and council meetings were therefore the most important element in municipal government, a great deal of work was deputed to council committees. The *Municipal Ordinance* required the appointment of only one committee but permitted any others that council desired. After 1894, council was required to appoint an "assessment committee", to check and correct the assessor's roll. From the beginning, however, councils took advantage of their privilege and proceeded to create a great variety of standing and special committees.

Standing committees normally were appointed at the beginning of each year to deal with regularly recurrent matters. The number and nature of these varied. When there were six councillors a frequent practice was to have six standing committees with each councillor serving as chairman of one of them. Almost always there were separate committees for finance, public works, health and relief, and for fire, water, and light, but many other activities were provided for and many different combinations existed.¹⁰⁴ The normal composition of a standing committee was three councillors, with one of them specified as chairman, either by council appointment or election by the members of the committee. Standing committees performed both legislative and executive functions. Their contribution in the first category was essentially preliminary and advisory. They were normally given general responsibility for particular phases of civic affairs and

¹⁰² *Prince Albert Times and Saskatchewan Review*, February 22nd, 1889.

¹⁰³ Prior to 1894, if there were more than four councillors, the Court of Revision consisted of five members of council.

¹⁰⁴ Examples of standing committees are those for by-laws, parks, fire and light, sanitary, finance and assessment, license and police, legal, health, printing, markets and scales, and combinations such as fire, water, health and light and license, police, and relief.

required to report on existing situations and make recommendations for improvement. The latter might take the form of an original draft of a by-law. In addition to general supervision, their attention was frequently directed by council to specific matters within their general field. Petitions, *e.g.*, for sidewalks and street grading, were normally turned over to the appropriate committee, and they were ordered to investigate complaints. They were asked to secure estimates of costs and to make recommendations for appointments. In each case their recommendations were reported to council and frequently accepted. Council insisted, however, on maintaining effective final authority. On numerous occasions a committee report would lead to a prolonged debate and the eventual adoption of some alternative policy. Committees acted also as agents of council in the performance of many executive functions. They supervised the activities of appointed officials in enforcing by-laws and other duties. When work was being done by contract they would secure tenders. In other cases they would hire labour and order materials. In either case they gave general supervision while the work was in progress. They audited and recommended for payment the accounts submitted therefor. They were responsible also for such matters as the bonding of municipal employees and the use of municipal property. Activity as a committee member and especially as chairman thus involved a substantial amount of the councillor's time.

The committee system was used not only for matters which were of regular occurrence but also for dealing with problems which arose infrequently and at irregular intervals. Such matters were often of very great importance and, taken collectively, involved a substantial amount of council activity. The composition of special committees was determined by the nature of the particular problem involved and therefore was much less uniform than in the case of standing committees. The most frequent membership was two or three councillors or the mayor and one or two councillors. Occasionally the whole council served. Special committees sometimes included local residents or town officials as well as members of council. The matters referred to such committees were almost limitless. Some pertained to the operations of the council itself, such as securing a place for meetings, striking standing committees, and revising by-laws. Others were related to policy-making, as in connection with securing information about alternative policies and costs of projects. And still others were executive in nature, as when a committee organized a reception or celebration, managed an emergency hospital, or drafted a petition or an important letter. Finally a special committee was frequently appointed to represent council on a community project along with representatives from voluntary organizations.

Elected representatives participated in municipal government as individuals as well as by being members of the council body and its committees. In this respect the mayor was the most active. In addition to presiding at council meetings he acted as council's representative or agent. Some of these were mere formalities, such as signing cheques, debentures, contracts, and proclamations. Other activities reflected his status as the formal head of the government, as when he represented the community at receptions for distinguished visitors or at official gatherings in other centres. His real significance in the machinery of government,

however, was associated with the duty imposed upon him by the *Municipal Ordinance* to be:

vigilant and active at all times in causing by-laws of the municipality to be put in force and duly executed; inspect and report to the council on the conduct of the officers of the municipality; cause as far as may be in his power all negligence, carelessness, or violation of duty to be prosecuted and punished; communicate from time to time to the council any information and make such recommendations as will tend to the improvement of the finances, health, security, and comfort of the municipality.

Only the mayor was specially charged with such duties and therefore it would seem that it was intended that he should bear a greater responsibility than the other elected representatives. However, the constitutional arrangements, as provided for in the *Municipal Ordinance* and in the individual municipalities' "Rules of Order", demonstrate that the government was of the "weak mayor" category. His term of office was the same as that of councillors until 1897 and shorter than theirs thereafter. At council meetings he presided but could participate in debate only after leaving the chair. He was eligible to vote along with other councillors but then had no further casting vote. Municipal officials were appointed by council as a whole rather than by the mayor and the normal liaison between officials and council was through council committees. He had no special powers in regard to the introduction or vetoing of the budget. Occasionally the mayor was given some general authority over a municipal officer,¹⁰⁵ but council minutes indicate that any problems in this connection were normally referred to a council committee and settled by council as a whole. What influence the mayor possessed, therefore, was not derived from his constitutional authority but instead based on his personality and experience. With rare exceptions, the length of service by mayors was no greater than that of councillors. Thus few mayors found their positions bolstered by lengthy experience in office or by public confidence evidenced by repeated selection as chief magistrate. Personal qualities undoubtedly differed but the difficulty frequently encountered in securing mayoralty candidates suggests there were not many persons desirous of dominating municipal government. Council minutes and newspaper reports show that mayors did suggest new policies from time to time but with little or no greater frequency than other council members. Furthermore, many such suggestions were not adopted and other policies were frequently carried through in spite of opposition by a mayor. Altogether, it would appear that the distinction between the mayor and councillors was much more a matter of formalities than of actual influence in determining the course of municipal government.

The final element in the machinery of government of urban municipalities was a group of officials appointed by the council. Certain of these were required by the *Municipal Ordinance* and formed the nucleus of the administrative system. Other officials were permitted and a great variety of these were appointed from

¹⁰⁵ e.g. Moosomin By-law No. 90 (1896 consolidation). The officer filling the post of inspector, constable, and policeman "shall generally be under the direction and control of the mayor or chairman of the said council for the time being".

time to time to supplement the central core. The original legislation of 1883 required the appointment of a clerk, treasurer, assessor, collector, auditor, road overseers, poundkeepers, constables, returning officer, and deputy returning officers.¹⁰⁶ The number of offices proved, however, to be excessive and too expensive for the needs of the slow-growing municipalities. Consequently, in 1897, in the interests of economy the central nucleus was simplified and consolidated.¹⁰⁷ The posts of clerk, treasurer, and collector, were eliminated and the duties transferred to a new official, the secretary-treasurer. The successful experience of Manitoba municipalities was adduced in support of this system. Further provision for consolidation was made in 1900 by permitting the secretary-treasurer to serve as assessor. In the Assembly debate at that time it was stated that it was desirable in some places to have some sort of "poobah".¹⁰⁸ This argument is suggestive of the significance of the centralization of authority in administration. As has been pointed out, the constitution of the municipality provided neither for continuity of policies nor for any focus in authority. Furthermore, these did not come about in practice, as might have been the case if elected officials had served for long continuous periods and if the mayor had acquired a dominating position in the council. But the appointed clerk and especially the later secretary-treasurer could serve a useful function in these regards. Their duties kept them in close touch with all aspects of municipal affairs as well as with other appointed officials, elected representatives, and the general public. As well, and in direct contrast to members of council, their periods of service tended to be long and continuous. For example, in Regina John Secord was clerk from the inception of municipal government early in 1884 until 1895. He was succeeded by James Balfour who served as clerk and later as secretary-treasurer until 1903. Such officials were well situated and qualified to promote continuity and integration in municipal affairs.

Two other officials were required. The *Contagious Diseases Ordinance* of 1897 and its successor in 1902, the *Public Health Ordinance*, required each city and town council to appoint a "health officer". Under the *Liquor License Ordinance*, after 1900, a "liquor license inspector" had to be appointed if the municipality wished to levy municipal license fees on wholesale and retail liquor businesses.

Aside from required officials the urban municipalities were authorized to appoint others at their discretion. Certain of these were specifically named: road overseers, poundkeepers, constables, street surveyors, arbitrators, street and building inspectors, scavengers, and officers of the fire department. Others might be appointed under general provisions which existed for most of the period in the *Municipal Ordinance*. After 1894 the relevant clause permitted "Appointing such officials under such names as the council may deem necessary for the carrying out of the work of the corporation, defining their duties and providing for their remuneration". The most important of these positions was that of "town officer". Until urban population became large each municipality normally ap-

¹⁰⁶ In 1888 the appointment of road overseers, pound-keepers, and constables was made optional.

¹⁰⁷ North-West Assembly debate, December 9th, 1897, as reported in the *Regina Leader*, December 16th, 1897.

¹⁰⁸ *The Regina Standard*, May 30th, 1900.

pointed a single person to this post. His function was essentially to enforce by-laws, including that for the maintenance of order, and to see to the general maintenance of town property. The variety of his duties is suggested by the variety of titles applied to him. The most common were "town inspector" and "town constable" but he might be referred to in addition as one or more of the following: fire inspector, inspector of buildings, health inspector, bell-ringer, caretaker, inspector of milk, street inspector, nuisance inspector, and chimney inspector. As population grew the activity involved in the duties of this position became more extensive and technical. As a consequence the functions tended to be allocated to several more specialized officials. There was usually a town solicitor although some municipalities secured legal assistance on an *ad hoc* basis. Fire department officials were appointed from the beginning to organize this vital service. Other officials were appointed, as and when needed, for such newly-introduced projects as electrical and other public utilities. Still others were required by the expansion of activity. Public works employees were hired on a more or less permanent basis. A "city foreman" might be appointed to supervise public works such as street-grading. Such a case involved the transfer of an executive function from council members to an appointed administrative official. Special collectors of dog and poll taxes were named as required. The precise duties of these various officials will be dealt with in connection with a later discussion of the functions performed by urban local governments.

A. N. REID

Note A

Ordinances No. 2 of 1883, No. 4 of 1884 (consolidation), No. 2 of 1885 (consolidation), No. 7 of 1886, No. 13 of 1887, No. 8 of Revised Ordinances of 1888 (consolidation), No. 19 of 1889, No. 2 of 1890, No. 25 of 1891-92, No. 27 of 1892, No. 3 of 1894 (consolidation), No. 25 of 1895, No. 27 of 1896, No. 8 of 1897 (consolidation), No. 26 of 1898, No. 70 of the Consolidated Ordinances of 1898, No. 15 of 1899, No. 23 of 1900, No. 23 of 1901, No. 9 of 1902, No. 18 of 1903, No. 22 of 1903 (second session), No. 6 of 1904.

Note B

The procedures to be followed were: (1) submission of a petition signed by two-thirds of those qualified to vote at the first election for councillors or, if the proposed area was within a "rural municipality", by two-thirds of those on the assessment roll who were resident within the proposed area, accompanied by a payment of \$100; (2) insertion of notice by the Lieutenant-Governor, in four consecutive weekly issues of an appropriate newspaper, of his intention to erect the area into a town; and (3) issue of a proclamation by the Lieutenant-Governor erecting the town municipality and ordering election of mayor and councillors. In 1884 provision was made for proceedings against erection. If a petition against erection was signed by one-third of the residents an election was to be held and action for or against erection determined by majority vote.

Note C

During the remainder of the Territorial period, except for the years 1894-6, the *Municipal Ordinance* either made reference to incorporation by special ordinance or did not mention procedure for erection. The 1894 legislation provided for petitions by councils of existing "rural municipalities" or by specified numbers of residents of a locality, publication and posting of notices of the proposal, and incorporation of the town, by letters patent, by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. No municipalities were erected in this way and the provisions were dropped in 1897.

Note D

The procedures for erecting villages into towns were: (1) taking a census, authorized by a ratepayers' meeting, to ensure that the requisite population existed; (2) approval of the erection by two-thirds of the ratepayers at a meeting specially called for the purpose; (3) posting of notices locally and publication of notices in the official gazette and in an appropriately located weekly

newspaper of the village overseer's intention to apply to the Lieutenant-Governor, on behalf of the village, for incorporation as a town; and (4) issue of a proclamation to that effect by the Lieutenant-Governor, after he had received satisfactory proof that the preceding steps had been taken.

Note E

The original legislation of 1883 provided for the erection of cities out of towns if the resident population was not less than 2,000. Action was to be initiated by a petition to the Lieutenant-Governor, signed by two-thirds of the persons assessed within the proposed area, and accompanied by a remittance of \$100. The Lieutenant-Governor was to publish notice of the proposal and subsequently to proclaim the erection of the city and to order the first elections. These provisions were dropped in 1885 and thereafter no reference was made to procedure except for the years 1894-6. The legislation of 1894 provided for the erection into cities of towns of 5,000 population. The procedures involved the town council posting or publishing notice of the proposal, the submission to the Assembly of a petition signed by two-thirds of the resident property-owners or house-holders and by a majority of the councillors, and, finally, the passage of appropriate legislation. These provisions were omitted from the consolidated legislation of 1897.

Note F

The original *Municipal Ordinance* specified five councillors (who were to elect their own chairman) but in the next year provision was made for the direct election of a mayor and four councillors. The number of councillors was raised to six in 1888, and in 1894 towns with a population of over 3,000 were permitted to raise the number to eight. After 1897, however, the number was again restricted to six. When towns were erected by special ordinance the number provided for was sometimes different from the current provision in the *Municipal Ordinance*. For cities, the latter specified a number not exceeding seven in the years 1883 and 1884, and ten in the years 1894 to 1896. In other years there is no reference to the number of council members and therefore the number specified for towns was effective. The special ordinance incorporating the City of Calgary provided for three councillors from each of three wards. Edmonton's ordinance of incorporation provided for two aldermen for each of four wards.

Note G

In 1884 the assessment qualification was fixed at \$600, reduced in 1888 to \$400, and raised in 1894 to \$500 freehold or \$1500 leasehold. The assessment qualification for candidates in city elections under the *Municipal Ordinance* was the same as for towns except in the years 1894-6. At that time it was \$2,000 freehold or \$5,000 leasehold. The special ordinance incorporating the City of Calgary fixed the assessment qualification at \$1,000.

Note H

Clergymen, judges, sheriffs, gaolers, bailiffs, other court officials, persons having contracts with or disputed claims against the municipality, officers of the Dominion and North-West Territories governments, paid officials of municipalities, and persons convicted of treason or of an offense punishable with death or imprisonment for more than five years. The special ordinance incorporating the City of Calgary disqualified persons holding licenses to sell intoxicating liquors within the city limits.

RECOLLECTIONS AND REMINISCENCES—By Mrs. May Davis

A Pinafored Printer

In the August 1955 issue of *Chatelaine* there appeared, under the title "A Pinafore Pioneer", a fascinating narrative of life on a prairie homestead in the early 1880's as experienced by a very young immigrant. The "Pinafore Pioneer" was a little English girl, May Clarke, now Mrs. May Davis of Regina. Mrs. Davis's exceptionally keen memory holds more, however, than the trials and excitements of pioneer farm life. For several years she worked on the staff of the leading territorial newspaper, the *Regina Leader*, when it was directed by its first, famous editor, Nicholas Flood Davin. We have persuaded Mrs. Davis that her memories of these experiences are unique, and of very general interest. She has, consequently, set them down for *Saskatchewan History* with that piquancy, perception, and compassion, which characterize all her recollections of the people and events of nearly seventy years ago.

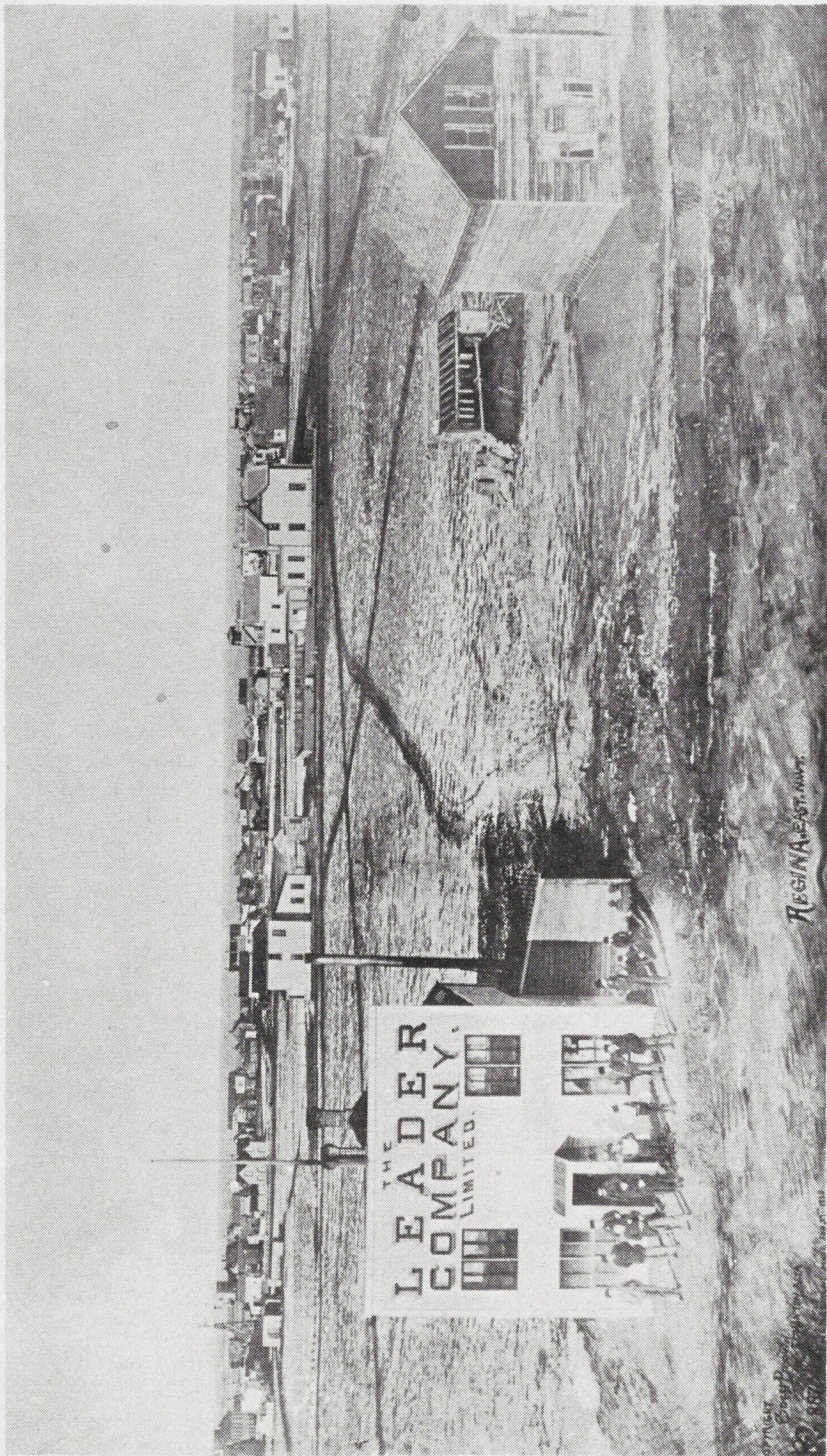
In the accompanying photograph, taken about 1889, Mrs. Davis, a small figure with clasped hands, stands to the left of Mr. Davin in front of the newspaper plant.

The Editor

IN glancing back over the years spent in Regina between 1886 and 1890 I cannot help feeling that some of the most important of them to me were the years which I spent in the employment of the *Regina Leader*, the city's pioneer newspaper. The somewhat primitive building, with a part false front, which housed the paper at that time, was situated on Victoria Avenue between Hamilton and Rose Streets. Our house was its nearest neighbor to the east. Nicholas Flood Davin, owner and editor of the paper, was a casual and political friend of my father's, which may have had something to do with my entering the newspaper world at a rather early age. It came about like this.

One evening my father surprised us all, as we sat at the tea-table, by telling mother that he had promised Mr. Davin to let me go to work at the "Leader Office" for a few weeks. He said that they were in need of more help in the folding and binding department, as the North-West Territories Ordinances had to be ready by a certain date, and they were short handed for the 'job'. Mother was not very enthusiastic about it, but I was quite pleased with the idea, not only because it meant escape for a time from always distasteful housework, but also at the prospect of earning a little money to 'help out'. Father said that the day's work began at 7.30 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m., with an hour off for dinner. My salary was to be \$10.00 per month of 26 working days. This sounded like wealth to me and opened up vistas of new frocks and shoes all round; things which always seemed to be in short supply in the family. I was thirteen years old at this time, and as there was no young baby in the home now, could be spared more easily than usual. My mother said—so rightly—"Spared to go to school!" But I went into the "Leader Office" instead, and found it a school of sorts, and not by any means a bad one.

I was wanted 'right away', and so the morning after father had made his announcement I presented myself—with a certain amount of trepidation—at the back door of the "Leader Office" where I was greeted with a young dust storm from the broom of a rather stolid faced lad of about my own age, or a little older. He wore a burlap apron and was sweeping what seemed to me to be



—Ernest Brown Collection

The Leader Office and Regina skyline, 1889

a hopelessly dirty floor. This was Gus Pingle, known to me afterwards as the Printer's Devil. We were instantly antagonistic, and I considered the name appropriate. Gus called the foreman, a Mr. Burbank, who after a few questions told me to follow him, and led me through what seemed to me to be a maze of machinery. "Presses", he said briefly, then stopped and pointed to the raftered ceiling above the presses, where to my surprise, I saw leather straps of various widths. Some of them passed over pulleys, which were fastened to the rafters and came down to, and encircled wheels on the presses. "Belts", said Mr. Burbank, adding, "Don't you ever come round here when the presses are working, and don't ever touch one of those belts or you might lose an arm, or something". After this kind warning, which nevertheless somewhat frightened me, the foreman took me to the south end of the long room and introduced me to Maggy Anderson, a pale-faced girl who was seated before a big table seemingly covered with sheets of printed paper. Maggy was the only binder left to cope with far too much work, and was accordingly very pleased to see me. Before he left us, Mr. Burbank showed me how to fold the printed sheets of paper—which I think had 16 pages of printing on each side—so that each one became a sort of booklet. I had to bring the numbers on the corners of the pages together, and scrape the folds down firmly with a brass rule.

Fortunately I had already learned to use my hands quickly and to work hard—when I felt so disposed (to quote Sairy Gamp)—and so it was not long before I was folding as many sheets per hour as the girl beside me, and in a few weeks—being very ambitious—more. In other words I was a success at my first job. Then followed the processes of collecting, stitching and covering the resulting books; after which the job-press man—Mr. Walter Scott—who worked immediately behind our table, took piles of the ragged edged results over to a guillotine-like machine, and slicing their edges off made them much neater. When they were finished we liked their appearance very much for they were nice, compact, small books, with green or orange colored covers and entitled, *Ordinances of the North-West Territories of Canada, 1887-88*, or something of that description.

Getting them out in time had been a hurried, scrambling sort of business, with some overtime work, but when it was finished I felt that I "belonged" in the "Leader Office", and I liked the feeling.

The corner where the binders' table was situated was a nice light one, close to a big south window. Of course it was cold in the winter, and very hot in the summer with big flies buzz-buzzing—plenty of them—all over the large panes; but it was quite removed from the "Comps", and a trifle cleaner than the rest of the place. All down the lower part of the east side of the room stood the big printing press (or presses) and nearer the middle the job, and hand presses, while on the west side of the room the compositors worked at their upper and lower cases, two abreast.

The editorial department was upstairs, in somewhat low-ceiled rooms, where Mr. Davin had his nice book-lined office, and Mr. J. J. Young, the sub-editor, his strictly business-like looking one. There was nothing at all luxurious to be

seen in the finish of this building. Visible joists and rafters were the rule, rather than the exception.

When I became one of the 'Staff' of the *Leader* it only—to the best of my recollection—consisted of six persons: J. J. Young, William Burbank, Walter Scott, Harry Hunt, Gus Pingle, and myself. Through the months though, and at specially busy times other compositors came and went. Vaguely, I remember the names of Jack McAra, Bismark McLaughlan, and a Mr. Salter. Then there was Jim McLaughlan, who looked after the engine which supplied the power for the presses on printing day.

All these men were from local families of law-abiding, church-going folk. Three of them were engaged to be married and working towards a home of their own. All had one purpose, to own and edit newspapers of their own in the near future, and all fulfilled their ambitions to a really remarkable degree. J. J. Young became editor of the *Calgary Herald*, Harry Hunt of the *Medicine Hat Times*, Walter Scott was with the *Regina Standard* for a time, and afterwards editor of the *Leader* in Regina. Jack McAra was, for a time, editor of the *Indian Head Vidette* while Gus Pingle—when I last heard of him—held a good position on the staff of the *Winnipeg Free Press*.

Everyone knows to what heights Walter Scott's industry and ambition finally led him, and that he eventually became the Hon. Walter Scott, first Premier of Saskatchewan. It seems strange to me that since our particular working points were so close together I have not more outstanding memories of Mr. Scott himself. I remember that he was—at that time—tall and slender, with a somewhat melancholy expression, and large dark eyes; also that he was good tempered and did not seem to mind the frequent teasing to which he was subjected by the other boys. I only met him a few times after he became Premier and found him quite interested in recalling old times and the friends of long ago in the "Leader Office".

I cannot remember any drinking, smoking, or swearing in the office, at least below stairs. But these 'chaps' were not what Robbie Burns called "unco guid", just a group of industrious, cheerful, likable fellows. I hold them in pleasant remembrance for they were all very kind to their little sister of the "Stick and Rule". One bad habit they all had in common: they chewed tobacco constantly and sloppily, spitting here, there, and everywhere—except in my corner. How I loathed the habit, which with type-dust, printer's ink, and machine-oil, was undoubtedly responsible for the brown and always dirty floors!

I do not feel myself competent to say a great deal about the *Leader's* great founder, and at that time editor, Nicholas Flood Davin. My work rarely brought me into contact with him except when, for some weeks, I was helping with the preparation of his book, *Eos, An Epic of the Dawn, and Other Poems*, for its trip to Winnipeg to be smartly finished in brown and gold. I imagine that the high estimation in which I have always held his brilliance and ability may have been largely a reflection of my father's. I do remember Mr. Davin's personality though, very well indeed, especially as he marched along the board side-walks, swinging

and sometimes gesticulating with his cane, and always talking to himself. (About what, I used to wonder. Was he denouncing his political enemies, or, more probably, preparing one of his splendid editorials for next week's paper?)

I also remember that Mr. Davin was kind to, and casually interested in, children. Little boys often had one of the old-time small five-cent pieces in their hands after he had passed by, and little girls felt his kind hand on their heads as he patted them, murmuring gently, "How are you my little pet?"

At the office, Mr. Davin always marched straight upstairs upon his arrival, where for the most part he remained. He had a lot of visitors, of one kind and another, who kept him busy. J. J. Young was his usual contact with "life below stairs", except for the very rare occasions when something went seriously wrong—with the presses perhaps, or some advertizer had been complaining—I never knew exactly, as it was not my business, but I do remember how apprehensive I used to feel when I heard Mr. Davin come *stamping* down the stairs and down to the far end of the room. At such times he shook his head and uttered short snorts as he walked, and I felt that something terrible was about to happen. But it never did; there were simply loud voices and then Mr. Davin, and perhaps the foreman, walking peacefully back again. However, once, after some such upset Mr. Burbank left, and I was sorry for that, for when he went I lost a good friend.

I several times heard Mr. Davin make one of his powerful and eloquent speeches. Once with my mother, after a big (for those days) political dinner, given in a hotel, we sat in what passed for a "Ladies Gallery" at that time. I shall always remember Mr. Davin as one of the especially great men of Regina's early days, and that we may well be proud to be able to say, "He once belonged to us".

And now to return for a little while to my own early experiences in the "Leader Office". Soon after the *Ordinances* were finished Maggy Anderson left the office for her father's homestead—and I became the only book-binder. There was not a great deal of that type of work to be done all the time though; only when the semi-monthly *North-West Territories Gazette* (in French and English) came off the press, or when the little Qu'Appelle Diocesan monthly magazine had to be folded, stitched and covered. I was needed then, however, and meanwhile was kept busy with various odd jobs of one kind and another. One of the cheerful young 'Comps' suggested that perhaps I was the "female Devil" of the establishment, a remark which caused a good deal of amusement, perhaps because of my childish, and somewhat prim manner. One day Mr. Burbank, the foreman, suggested that I begin to learn the cases. He followed the suggestion with a lesson, advising me particularly to "mind my P's and Q's". Before long I was given a "Stick" and "Rule" and instructed in the essential details of becoming a compositor. Next I was initiated into the process of "distributing Pi", an endless chore, after which I was never short of work.

I liked better the work of "copy reading" for those employed in correcting galley proofs, and did a good deal of it, more particularly for Mr. J. J. Young.

Saturday, late in the afternoon, was my favorite time, when the weekly paper came off the presses, and must be folded—by hand—as quickly as possible for distribution to the men and boys waiting about for it. All the “staff” turned to and helped with this folding, as there seemed to me to be a great deal of it to do. Speed was the important thing about it.

I always liked the damp, “printer’s inky” smell, the people and the effort of trying to fold as many papers as anyone else.

How different it must be now, when machinery does it all—better no doubt, and faster, and cheaper, (wages being what they are)! But I like to remember those days when personal effort meant so much, and work was not only a duty but also a joy.

Next spring came a pleasant change in the staff. One of the “Comps” left us, just at a busy time, and in answer to an advertisement another one came to us from Medicine Hat. A Miss Susie Whitlock. This was quite an innovation, but she came highly recommended and proved to be the quickest compositor in the office, also she was liked and respected by all. More than that by me; I loved Susie, who in spite of twelve years seniority was a good companion, and a kind friend to me.

I spent a good part of my time typesetting now, and enjoyed my work. The Church magazine, for which a larger type was used than for the *Gazette* and *Leader*, became almost entirely my “job”; and very proud I was of the fact. I was often very tired though at the end of the long day. Mother was less well again and therefore much of the housework fell to my lot (after suppertime) and life began to lose some of its zest. Then—sometime that year—I cannot say just when—but perhaps in the fall, Regina’s first severe epidemic struck the children of the town, and tragedy touched many homes. Diphtheria of a specially malignant type appeared, and it was, in those antitoxinless days, very hard to check its force and spread. Its first victim—who succumbed very quickly—was young Charlie Potter, the only child of his mother, and she was a widow. Then followed little Ernest Hunt (my brother’s playmate), and so the “Reaper” passed on through the town, taking a child here and a child there. Two, sometimes, from one family, sometimes more. Mr. and Mrs. Mann lost all four of their children, two boys and two girls. Schools were closed, and for a short time, almost every day saw the funeral of a little child. Our two doctors had more work than they could cope with, so another doctor was sent for, a Dr. Parent, whom we all liked very well.

Why the delicate Clark children, who had been going to school with the others at the beginning of the epidemic, did not catch the infection early, I shall never know, but it was left for me—the strong one of the family—to bring it home to them! One morning when I got up, I had a slight sore throat—not an uncommon thing. I simply wound a strip of flannel about it and went to work, as usual; but in the afternoon as I sat folding *Gazettes*, I found it increasing hard to keep my eyes open and my head felt heavy, so heavy, that I presently let it fall forward and rest on my arms, on the table. My next memory is of opening my eyes some

time later to see the foreman, standing looking very seriously at me: "You'd better go home May", he said, "Right away". So home I crept, through a dizzy world, to fall into a sort of stupor, soon after my arrival.

That was the last of the "Leader Office" for me, for six weeks, during which time I was very, very, ill, and made the acquaintance of good Doctor Parent. Almost made the acquaintance of Charon too, and crossed the Dark River, but not quite. Except for father, all the family had diphtheria after that, but all recovered quite quickly. Well, "Nuff said", too much perhaps, on this subject; but it *was* of "Leader Office" interest, for they were very busy just then, and missed me a good deal, and certainly gave me a hearty welcome upon my return.

By the time that I went back again I found that the epidemic was over, with only the many vacant chairs, and saddened faces, and the little new graves in the cemetery, to remind us of it.

The early spring of 1890 found me still working contentedly at the "Leader Office". It was a busier place then than when I first made its acquaintance in 1887, with more compositors, and with expansion in all its departments. One rack of cases had even shouldered its way impertinently into the binders' corner of the room, where another girl had been taken on to help with the additional work. Susie Whitlock had left Regina altogether, and gone home to Medicine Hat (and how badly I missed her) but there was not really much time to miss anyone, for we were all busy, busy-busy. And then, in the beginning of May, in the middle of it all, I had to go home again! And to stay, this time. It seemed that my mother was ill, and could spare me no longer. So I had to relinquish my secret desire to become a famous newspaperwoman (à la Nelly Bly, perhaps) and "Turn again home". Not, however, without a secret pang or two which I kept strictly to myself.

And so my participation in printing office affairs ended abruptly; but left many memories behind it. And—with apologies to the shade of Lewis Carrol—"A passionate 'yen', for paper and pen, has lasted the rest of my life!"

DOCUMENTS OF WESTERN HISTORY

Father Bruno's Narrative, "Across the Boundary": Part II.

In this issue we present the second installment of the account written by Father Bruno Doerfler, O.S.B., describing the travels of the party from Minnesota which was organized in 1902 to investigate the possibility of establishing a Catholic colony in Western Canada.

We are grateful to The Very Rev. Peter Windschiegel, O.S.B. of Muenster for permission to use the photograph of Father Bruno which appeared in the book *Fifty Golden Years* (Muenster, 1953).

Readers are asked to note that the *St. Peter's Bote*, referred to in the introduction to the first instalment, has ceased publication.

The Editor

As we rapidly travelled over the country, we could not help noticing that all the homestead lands had been taken, apparently many years ago, as they were mostly under cultivation, and that the farm buildings were very comfortable, thus indicating that the owners were well situated. The railroad lands were, however, still lying idle and untilled, being used as a pasture for large herds of fine dairy cattle. Mr. Roy, whom we learned to appreciate more and more every day as a walking encyclopedia of Canadian land lore, produced a diagram of the vicinity, which showed that the lands are owned by an eastern speculator. He explained that practically all the railroad lands in the neighborhood had been bought up by the gentleman mentioned and were now held at \$5.50 per acre and upward, and that the farmers of the vicinity, although they were well able to buy these lands, preferred to use them for grazing purposes without paying taxes on them, since they thought that there was little danger of a sale of these lands to actual settlers within a reasonable time. What put them under this impression, was, according to Mr. Roy, the fact that immigration to this section has practically ceased for nearly twenty years, and that free homestead lands can still be had within a few miles. We could but smile, thinking of the disappointed faces these good Canadians would make in case it should be decided to start a colony in this vicinity and all uncultivated lands would be acquired for colonization purposes.

Meanwhile our hunters had found nothing worth wasting their cartridges upon. Prairie chickens seemed scarce in these parts and the numerous ducks that enjoyed the pleasures of life on the ponds were so wary that they fled as soon as the party came into sight. At last a coyote was seen about a hundred yards to the west of the road. As soon as our hunters made preparations to give him a suitable reception, however, he disappeared in a ravine just to the rear of his former position. A moment later he stood on the opposite bank of the ravine, apparently laughing in his sleeve at the disappointed Nimrods.

Shortly before noon we arrived at Montgomery post office, about ten miles beyond the Pipestone. Our driver had expected to stop here for dinner. Hence we had taken no supply of provisions along. We had, however, reckoned without the host. The lady of the house, apparently frightened at the large number of guests, told us that we could not obtain a meal at her place, but that we could be accommodated at Mr. Smith's, about a mile further south.



—Courtesy St. Peter's Abbey

Father Bruno Doerfler, O.S.B., equipped for travel across the prairies, 1902.

Mr. Smith received us very hospitably. His wife was seriously ill at the time, he told us, but his grown daughters would be pleased to prepare dinner for the crowd. The horses were accordingly unhitched and led to the barn. As this barn, like all the buildings on the farm, was of the peculiar construction found in new countries settled by Ontario people and distinguished by the name of "sod building", I promptly satisfied my curiosity by investigating its architecture.

The building is a spacious one, being large enough to comfortably shelter 40 to 50 head of cattle or horses. It consists of a frame made by setting a number of strong posts into the ground at the line of the outer walls. Upon these posts strong logs were laid as plates. Along through the center of the building a similar row of posts was set, to sustain the ridge pole, and midway between this row and the outside walls similar posts, somewhat shorter, were placed, carrying strong beams on the top. Next, poplar rails, peeled and dried to prevent their early decay, were nailed closely together against the outer row of posts. Wherever necessary, openings were made for doors and windows and provided with wide and strong frames. Outside this framework and resting against it, a wall of sod was laid about three

feet thick at the base and gradually receding to about two feet thickness at the top. The roof was made by laying poplar rails like rafters, but very close together, from the ridge pole down to and beyond the outer walls. Upon these poles, several layers of sod were placed, and a cheap and comfortable barn was finished. Mr. Smith's home, which contains three or four rooms, was constructed in a similar manner.

After dinner, we had a pleasant chat with our host, who informed us that he was the oldest settler in this immediate vicinity, having come from Ontario twenty years before. During all these years, he told us, he had only three partial failures of crops, due to drought, although his home is directly north of the drought-stricken regions of western North Dakota. This observation agrees perfectly with the results of scientific investigation and practical experience, which prove that the eastern border of the "dry belt" recedes westward the further north it runs. From Mr. Smith's house we had a splendid view of the plains southward to the Moose Mountains, ten miles away, and for many miles towards the west and southwest. All this district was still unoccupied in spite of its fertility. Mr. Smith informed us that wheat in his vicinity averaged 35 to 40 bushels per acre in 1901, and the standing crop evidently promised to give a yield not much inferior for 1902.

Asked concerning the winters in this region, our host informed us that they were cold and stormy as the great plains to the southwest and west allowed the winds an unobstructed sweep across the country. Blizzards were not unfrequent in winter, and hot, dry, southern winds not unknown in summer. At times also the chinooks were felt. From all that we could learn from Mr. Smith and from our driver on the subject of climate in this vicinity, we concluded that it was very similar to that of North Dakota.

From a well in our host's yard we drew some water in order to examine its quality and found it very good. Across the road was the valley of a small stream, which rises in the Moose Mountains and flows northwards into the Pipestone. We were told that it had springs all along its banks, which served to keep it open during winter so that cattle could be watered conveniently even in the coldest weather.

After men and teams had finished their dinners, we travelled westward for many miles. Here and there we found a homestead with a few acres under cultivation and a few tumble-down shacks as buildings. Our driver told us that these were second homesteads of well to do farmers who lived a few miles further north. The law permits persons who fulfilled all the required conditions for securing their homesteads prior to 1889 to take a second homestead. If the latter is in the vicinity of their present homes, they need not live on the second homestead. Of this law, the homesteaders referred to had taken advantage.

The afternoon was hot in spite of a strong breeze from the west. For the sake of comfort, our hunters, who now preceded us, took off their coats and vests, placing them on the rear of the buggy. By and by, the wind proving too annoying, they also took off their hats. Now and then a specially strong gust of wind would deposit one of these articles by the wayside, where we would stop to pick it up.

Our driver finally remarked that, "if things kept on in this way, we would soon be in possession of an entire suit."

About four o'clock we stopped at a farmhouse for a drink of water. Here we made restitution of the found articles and continued on our way, the hunters soon lagging behind on account of some game which they had espied.

Late in the afternoon, we had reached a point about 12 or 15 miles west of Mr. Smith's home. As no suitable place for lodging was in sight, we decided to retrace our way for a few miles to a large farm house, which we had noticed some distance from the road. Soon we encountered our hunters, just as Henry had killed a number of ducks in a pond by the wayside. To get possession of these ducks was now a serious problem, as we had no dog with us. Leaving our friends to solve the problem, we pushed on to order supper. Shortly afterward we found a hat by the wayside which we discovered to be Henry's.

Arrived at the farmhouse we made arrangements for meals and lodging. Soon we sat down to a sumptuous meal. Our friends had not yet arrived. Finally, as the shades of night were falling, they arrived. Henry had apparently lost his boots and socks also. His feet and legs, bare up to the knees were covered with mud. His explanation was, that he had been obliged to strip and walk into the muddy water to secure the ducks, which he exhibited with sportsman's pride. He was happy to regain his hat and, after a thorough lavation, he was ready to satisfy the cravings of his hunger.

After supper the ducks were cleaned and the lady of the house undertook to prepare them so that they could be used for cold lunch. They were handed over to our friends on the morrow. As this was the last seen of the ducks by the rest of the party, I fear that they shared the fate of Henry's hat, falling by the wayside to become a prey of the coyote.

Our Nimrods spent the night in the hay-stack, being desirous to harden themselves for camp life. The rest of the party preferred to sleep in a comfortable bed whilst it still could be had.

On the following morning we returned to town by a road lying from 6 to 10 miles west of the one we had followed the previous morning. The country we traversed was similar to what we saw on the preceding day. We crossed the Pipestone at the mouth of the stream we had noticed at Mr. Smith's farm. This stream has cut an immense gulch through the highlands bordering the Pipestone. Evidently, the country we had just visited must have been covered by an immense lake in past ages, the outlet of which was through this channel. Shortly after noon we found ourselves again at "The Woodbine" in Whitewood.

THROUGH EASTERN ASSINIBOIA

After dinner, some time was spent in discussing the advisability of visiting the country north of Whitewood, beyond the Qu'Appelle River, but, finally, we decided to abandon that trip, as Mr. Roy told us that there would be little chance of finding a sufficiently large tract of land in that vicinity to form an extensive colony. Finally we decided to take the local train for Regina, the Capital of the North West Territories, at 4.00 P.M. in order to view by daylight the intervening

country, which is considered one of the choicest agricultural districts in the Northwest.

Whilst some members of our party went out to see the sights of the town, among which is the Catholic chapel in which divine services are held once a month, as we were told, the others, myself included, employed the time in writing letters home to report on the progress of our investigations. One of my letters addressed to Mr. Lange, resulted in the establishment of a small colony 12 miles west of the Golden Plain, before the end of the month.

The train was on time and soon we moved towards the setting sun. The first station west of Whitewood is Broadview, which owes its importance principally to the fact that it is a division point of the Canadian Pacific. The tributary territory of this village is very restricted on account of the large Indian reservations lying to the north, whilst settlements do not extend much more than ten miles towards the south. The following station, Oakshela, labors under the same disadvantages.

Grenfell is situated in the center of the first of a series of large and prosperous German settlements, which extend westward to Regina. From here, as far west as Pilot Butte, we noticed that the soil was very rich and produced immense quantities of golden grain. Along the railroad, this district has been settled for a number of years and the great influx of settlers during the past few years has caused thousands of new farms to be opened recently. Hence preparations were being made at every station for handling the immense wheat crop. At some of the stations three or four elevators were in course of erection.

Having left Wolseley and Sintaluta behind us, which are both wealthy and busy towns in the midst of very choice farming districts, we arrived at Indian Head, where the Territorial Experimental Farm is situated. A fine view of the Farm was had just before the train pulled into the town. The town itself is one of considerable importance on account of its extensive agricultural trade.

At the next station, Qu'Appelle, the great government telegraph line starts out for the north and northwest, through Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta, connecting a number of towns and military posts of the Northwest with the outside world. It extended as far west as Edmonton many years ago, and proved of great service during the Riel half-breed rebellion in 1885.

McLean is the next station. Apparently it had been overlooked by settlers at first, but they have come nevertheless, as is proved by the three large elevators of which the place is proud. Two of these were just being completed. The business men in our party were not slow to notice that this place, with its three elevators, which must have a large tributary territory, had but one store, and they concluded that this place would undoubtedly offer a splendid opening to some enterprising merchants.

(To be continued)

Book Reviews

THE STORY OF A PROVINCE. A JUNIOR HISTORY OF SASKATCHEWAN. By John H. Archer and Alexander M. Derby. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1955. Pp. x, 278, illus. \$3.00.

UNDER ordinary circumstances most historical research is initially useful only to advanced students and historians themselves; a considerable time usually elapses before this research filters down into the hands of the layman, and often it never reaches our "younger generation". The research of Saskatchewan historians this past year has proven to be an exception. Much of the historical writing of our Jubilee year has been for the consumption of the general public, and some of it has even been provided by the layman himself. More particularly, our junior readers have been kept in mind.

The Story of a Province is an adaptation for junior readers of *Saskatchewan: The History of a Province* by Jim Wright. This junior history is not designed to be merely a "watering down" or a reflection of the original work from which it is taken. Instead, it possesses a character and a flavor of its own. The style and manner of presentation are with a purpose—an appeal to the young audience for whom it is written. An effective combination of vigorous style and an intimacy with the province itself makes the story live. One feels he is becoming acquainted with a young and virile province.

The book begins with a brief survey of our geography and climate and takes the reader from geological origin, through periods of early settlement, struggle and uncertainty, to the emergence of a province playing a unique and significant role in Canadian and world affairs. The authors present our province as a distinct cultural unit within the general development of Canada, not apart from the rest of the prairies but rather in relation to the whole of western Canada.

One cannot fail but be impressed by the treatment of ordinarily difficult concepts which are here presented simply and in a manner easily grasped by junior readers. (For example, the geological explanation of the formation of Saskatchewan's mineral deposits, dealt with in Chapter II.)

The illustrations by Mr. A. W. Davey are another outstanding feature. For non-color illustrations these are most effective, well arranged, and for the most part typically Saskatchewan. This symbolic artistry has also extended to the cover.

With regard to the grade level for which the book is suited, I would suggest that the first few chapters are at the Grade VII or VIII reading level. The reading becomes somewhat more difficult as the book progresses, with the latter part closer to the Grade IX or X reading level.

It is refreshing to find a history of this type organized almost entirely on a chronological basis. The usual combination of topical and chronological organization frequently leaves the young reader confused. I would further suggest that the authors' intention was not to provide a reference book on Saskatchewan history, since their scope necessarily limits the detail on any one subject. This

book should be read in its entirety and therefore would be suitable as a text on Saskatchewan history with the teacher supplementing and referring to additional sources.

In the past year the general public has been made abundantly aware of the fact that our province has a thrilling past, but this is only a beginning. We must continue now to add to our supply of recorded fact, thinking particularly of our younger generation. We cannot expect one book to provide all that is necessary in this regard, but it is nonetheless a worthwhile contribution and ranks with the others of Jubilee production.

A great need has been partially met; for this we are grateful to the authors. It is to be hoped that more such books will be forthcoming, especially ones that can be placed in the hands of our school population.

ROBERT N. ANDERSON

THE SASKATCHEWAN ICELANDERS: A STRAND OF THE CANADIAN FABRIC. By W. J. Lindal. Winnipeg: The Columbia Press Ltd., 1955. Pp. 363, maps. illus. \$4.00.

NUMERICALLY they are a small group—in 1951, 23,307 persons in the whole of Canada were enumerated as Icelanders. For statistical purposes they are often grouped with the Scandinavians or worse still become lost at the end of a long table as “other”. The Book of Settlements, which is regarded by many demographers as one of the most complete early population counts, suggests that the original migrants to the volcanic northern island were 84 per cent Norwegian, 3 per cent Swedish and the remaining 13 per cent from the British Isles. Following the original settlement which spanned the years from 874 to 930 there was no significant movement in or out of the country for almost one thousand years. The result was a highly distinctive culture born of the intermingling of Norseman and Briton in a new environment.

The years following the middle of the 19th century were difficult in Iceland. The population was beset by great hardships, from the elements and from economic circumstances. Reports reached the island that land and golden opportunity were available in “America”. Faced with the prospect of improving his lot and that of his children, and with perhaps a stirring of his Viking blood, the Icelander ventured forth. Migration from the country became general by 1873-74. The majority of the migrants were directed to Gimli in Manitoba where a settlement was founded in 1875. The movement was westward and ten years later in 1885 the first homestead rights granted to an Icelander were recorded in the area which was to become Saskatchewan.

This is the story of these Icelandic people who settled in Saskatchewan, the traditions they brought with them and the contribution which they have made. It is fitting that their story should be told by one of the early Saskatchewan Icelanders, Judge W. J. Lindal, who migrated to the area with his parents in 1890.

Judge Lindal divides the movement of Icelandic settlers into Saskatchewan into roughly two periods, the first which began in 1885 into the Churchbridge-

Calder-Tantallon areas and the second around the turn of the century into the Leslie-Wynyard-Dafoe area south of the Quill Lakes. The character of the two periods varied considerably. The first settlers came directly from Iceland with no knowledge of the English language, few economic assets and no experience with agricultural methods on the new continent. The migrants of the second period came mainly from North Dakota and Argyle in Manitoba where Icelandic settlements had become crowded. By the time they reached Saskatchewan they had acquired some capital and considerable experience. The first settlement was launched shortly before the famed drought of the 1890's and many of the original settlers left the area. At present the centre of the Icelandic community in Saskatchewan is the Lakes Settlement with its hub at Wynyard. The author has methodically listed the names of the pioneer residents in each district. This will prove a source of valuable information to future historians and will be carefully studied by the Icelanders themselves.

The most vivid sections of this book describe life in the early settlements and the Icelandic customs which the settlers carried on. It was not sheer accident that the Icelanders were directed to the gently rolling partly wooded park country. It was thought that with no experience with grain farming they would fare better on lands suited to mixed farming. Indeed the early settlers were much dependent on their animals for food, clothing and transport. The Magnus Henrikson letter, a sensitive essay written for the 1916 issue of the *O. S. Thorgeirson Almanac* reveals the respect of the early pioneer for his cows and oxen. When the terrain was rough, stockings of canvas were made for the oxen to prevent their feet from getting sore. Haying was the busiest time of year and the task of putting up fodder was attacked with much enthusiasm. The home woollen industry was an important source of income. Many an Icelander cherishes childhood memories of assisting with the cleaning and carding of the raw wool and of sitting enthralled as the women sang at their spinning wheels.

One of the most beautiful Icelandic customs is the celebration of the first day of summer. The celebration of this day, the Thursday between April 18th and 27th, had its beginning in heathen times when the year was divided into two seasons, winter and summer. In one Saskatchewan community the annual celebration is still eagerly anticipated. This is in Mozart where the Ladies' Aid Viljinn each year present a concert in the community hall. There is song and dance, always a play and sometimes recitation of Icelandic poetry. A banner at the front of the hall proclaims "Happy Summer", in Icelandic of course.

These people brought with them a long tradition of democratic action and it was not surprising that this should early become evident in community organizations. No sooner had the settlers arrived than thought was given to the establishment of a school district. This was followed closely by the organization of community halls, congregations, reading clubs and Ladies' Aid societies. As early as 1891 a co-operative store was formed in the Calder district and at about the same time a co-operative creamery began operation in Saltcoats. To Johannes Einarsson go the laurels for organizing what we claimed to be the first co-operative enterprises in that part of the North-West which later became Saskatchewan. With such a background of community action it was natural for the Icelander to meet

the confusion of the drought and depression first with deep and agonizing thought, then discussion with his neighbour and then action. Icelandic communities have been quick to offer their support to the progressive movements organized to better the lot of the farmer.

Most Icelanders have fared well in their adopted land. Judge Lindal includes short biographies of a number who have become recognized as leaders on the wider scene. One pioneer expressed the feelings of many when he stated, "Yes, I would like to visit the Old Country but not to stay as I would long for the prairie sunshine".

OLINA ASGEIRSSON STRUTHERS

MEN AND TRADE ON THE NORTHWEST FRONTIER, AS SHOWN BY THE FORT OWEN LEDGER. By *George F. Weisel*. Missoula: Montana State University Press, 1955. Pp. xxxix, 291, illus., maps. \$5.00.

WHOOOP-UP COUNTRY. THE CANADIAN-AMERICAN WEST, 1865-1885. By *Paul F. Sharp*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955. Pp. xiii, 347, illus., maps. \$5.50.

Two recently published volumes from the presses of American universities throw considerable light on western American frontier life during the second half of the nineteenth century. Since the periods covered in both works were eras of trade, preceding the influx of more permanent settlers into the American and Canadian foothills regions, it is not surprising that both are vitally concerned with the men and the places and the goods of the trading period. There is, however, a notable difference in the approaches used in these two somewhat similar studies, for the one is an extremely detailed record of a single trading post over a period of ten years, while the other paints a broader canvas, the social, economic and political development of an entire region during two exciting and important decades. Each, in its own way and within its limitations, is an admirable work, providing something of interest and value for both the general reader and the historian.

Unlike the Canadian West, where the fur trade was almost wholly the prerogative of large companies, the American foothill and mountain country saw, in addition to the establishments of large British and American companies, numerous ventures by "free traders" owning individual trading posts or "forts". One such was Fort Owen, Montana, which occupied the site of a pioneer mission to the Flathead Indians, established in 1840 by that intrepid Jesuit traveler, Father De Smet. The mission was not successful, and in 1850 the site, as well as such improvements as a grist mill and a saw mill, was sold to Major John Owen, who apparently saw in the fertile Bitterroot Valley an inviting home. Owen left his position as sutler with a rifle regiment bound for Oregon and commenced on a small scale the trade which was to occupy him for twenty years. During that time he built an imposing adobe establishment and carried on a relatively prosperous trade, with the Indians, with the miners, with the wagon trains of immigrants bound for the western coast, and with the first permanent settlers of his own district.

Owen's account book, a detailed record of transactions for the years 1850-

1860, is the subject of George Weisel's study. Except for infrequent deletions of unduly repetitious entries, the bulk of the ledger is here reproduced. It is, in essence, a record of the many persons who patronised Owen's post, giving a day-by-day account of purchases and payments, the latter more often by labor or by goods than by cash. The editor has assiduously traced these "customers", where possible, and has introduced the various ledger entries with biographical sketches of the individuals concerned. The book becomes, therefore, a notable record not only of the type of trade carried on at a frontier post of a century ago, but also of the men who pioneered the region, both the itinerant trappers and miners of the earliest days and the ranchers and farmers who soon displaced them. An appendix lists the prices of some two hundred articles, as gleaned from the ledger entries, and these show a remarkable variety, ranging from adobe bricks and ammunition to wagon tires and wire, and including such diverse items as brandy and scalping knives, ear rings and fish hooks, grain cradles and porcupine quills, branding irons and needles. An extensive bibliography, an excellent index, and an adequate map are further recommendations of this interesting and informative book.

Paul Sharp's *Whoop-up Country* tells a somewhat more familiar story, but one which is of no less interest to the reader. His subject is the region of northern Montana and southern Alberta which bordered the trail from Fort Benton on the Missouri to Fort Macleod on the Old Man. He traces the development of that region economically, socially and historically, with perhaps most attention to the results attendant on its political division. Geographically the area on both sides of the international boundary was and is an entity, but the fact of the boundary's existence and the resultant differences, however slight, in the political, social and ethnological development of the two populations, bulks large in the determination of the destiny of the Whoop-up country. Sharp displays sound knowledge of the area, based on extensive research, as well as considerable facility as an author, in this study of the transition from a country known only to the native Indians, through the coming of the whisky traders and the establishment of law under the N.W.M.P., to the gradual arrival of the ranchers and, after the building of the transcontinental railways, the farmers.

This is a tale worth the telling, though told before, and a book well worth the reading, for its impartial, carefully documented, often moving and always colorful account of a way of life now past. Across its pages move heroic figures, together with those whose only claim to fame rests in their presence in this new country while history was being made. Excitement and action are found in the struggles to erect and maintain a commercial empire centered on Fort Benton, in the work of the newly-established "Mounties", in the wagon trains battling terrain and climate, in the Cypress Hills Massacre, and in the contretemps resulting from the arrival in Canada of Sitting Bull and the Sioux warriors, fresh from their ambush of Custer. All the hopes and the hardships and the humor of the early days of the west are caught and effectively portrayed, as are the machinations of the politicians and the empire builders who also influenced the future of one of the last and liveliest of the frontier regions of America.

DEAN HALLIWELL

Notes and Correspondence

Mr. James Cooper of West Bend provides the following interesting comment on the article "Behind the Footlights" in the last issue of *Saskatchewan History*:

Referring to the article by Mrs. D. D. Irwin. I was in Indian Head in October 1904 and went to a meeting in this new Opera House which was addressed by the Hon. Clifford Sifton, 'the Young Napoleon of the West', the placards called him. I think it was said that was the first time the Opera House was used. I remember it as a very fine building for such a small place. Senator Perley also said a few words for the Conservatives.

The Wolverine Hobby and Historical Society has continued its active program of meetings at Spy Hill during the past winter, under the presidency of Mrs. F. C. Dafoe, according to news releases issued by Mrs. Florence Barker. Meetings were held on December 6th, January 3rd, and March 6th, which included discussions on the Almighty Voice episode (a talk by Mr. Peter Cropp of Gerald), and on the history of Fort Ellice (presentations by several members of the Society). Membership of the Society includes residents of Spy Hill, Welby, Tantallon, Marchwell, Rocanville, Hazelcliffe, and Russell, Man.

Lack of space in this number has prevented the inclusion of a further supplementary list of Jubilee local histories. Twenty-four new items have come to the editor's attention since the last list was published in *Saskatchewan History*. These will be reported in our fall number.

The 96 page final report of the Saskatchewan Golden Jubilee Committee has just been issued, and may be procured on request from the secretary, Mr. John H. Archer, Legislative Librarian, Regina. The report describes the objectives, organization, and activities of the Committee, its sub-committees, and the Jubilee Office. Though the enthusiasm, excitement and multifarious activities of Jubilee Year cannot be captured in a pamphlet, this report gives an excellent idea of the spirit in which the program was carried on. It is a modest assessment of a job well done, and a stimulating and useful guide for similar celebrations in the future.

Contributors

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These include:

1. Nipawi, on the Saskatchewan River, and its Historic Sites. (1944).
2. Forrest Oakes, Charles Boyer, Joseph Fulton and Peter Pangman in the North-West. 1765-1793. (1937).
3. The Canada Jurisdiction Act (1803) and the North-West. (1938).
4. The New Nation, the Métis. (1939).
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